**Diga Woreda Site Visit Report**

**Dates**: 04 – 09 October 2012

**Participants**: Zelalem Lema and Dr Aklilu Amsalu

**Agenda for the visit:**

* To facilitate the interview of IP members at different level and data collections for Dr Aklilu (consultant) for the ODI research on political economy and equity analysis of pilot rainwater management intervention: Incentives and barriers to innovation and adoption of RMD technologies and approaches
* To meet technical group of the IP to review and revise next activity plans including field day and Innovation Fund utilization
* To visit the pilot site at Dembi with Dr Aklilu and woreda Technical Group Members to check on the progress of the fodder development
* With the Technical Group members to finalize the development of communal grazing land **bylaw** at pilot level with technical support from Woreda Cooperative Office

**Facilitating ODI Research work**

Dr Aklilu (the consultant) managed to successfully interview the IP members at different level. Representatives of the Woreda IP members including Technical Group Members were the first to be interviewed at Diga office of Agriculture. The next IP representatives interviewed at Nekmte level in Hundee office were Ato Fufa from Hundee and Ato Debela from EECMY both representing NGOs. On the other day a field visit was organized to the pilot site found at Dembi with the help of IP focal person called Ato Gutema for Dr Aklilu to see the pilot fodder development site both at communal and private grazing land. Dr Aklilu has also talked to farmers, DAs and Technical Group of the IP members to learn about the pilot intervention at the site level. On another day we organized an interview with representative of farmers involved in the pilot who were selected from communal grazing land, private grazing land and backyards. Then on the next day Dr Aklilu held an interview with farmers who didn’t participate in the pilot intervention of fodder development but who have information about the pilot project.

**Check on the progress of the IP activities**

In addition to facilitate and arrange interviews for Dr Aklilu I managed to meet and discuss with the Technical Group members at woreda level to revise the next IP activities and review progresses made so far. The first draft of the next IP activities were first done and presented to the TG members by Ato Debela who is the local facilitator of the IP. We have identified that the communal grazing land bylaw development was made by the farmers but not technically supported by the Woreda cooperative expert to check if the bylaw satisfies the criteria set by the cooperative office. Then we decided and managed to get the expert from the woreda office of cooperative and visit the sites to discuss on the bylaw at Arjo Kebele. Accordingly, based on the comment given by the cooperative expert the Technical group and the DAs amended and formalized the communal grazing land bylaw which doesn’t change the main content that the farmers agreed but writing it again in a structured format based on the guideline that the expert was referring to. The DAs with the IP focal person from the livestock will meet again the owners of the communal grazing land to discuss and fill with information which was lacking and re-sign by all members. The original copy with seal from the kebele admin office will be with the secretary of the group of farmers and carbon copy for the kebele administration and the woreda.

I have also collected relevant information based on what Abera have collected in his last field visit to Diga and submitted the printed to the TG contact person named ato Gutema. The information is all about the general information about the woreda and information about Arjo kebele. Then the specific information I have added on Abera’s data include all farmers land holding size and number of livestock owned and the size of land they have contributed for the pilot fodder development project.

**Revised next IP Activities**

I have discussed also with the Technical Group members and revised the next IP activities.

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| **Activities** | **Responsible** | **When** | **Remarks** |
| Getting cooperative expert and validate the community bylaw at site level | IP Technical Group members | 15 Oct 2012 | The Original copy will be with the secretary of the farmers group and carbon copy for the kebel and woreda admin office |
| Farmers Field Day | IP Technical Group members | 23 Oct 2012 | The budget and detail activity including who will be invited at the site level will be ready by 19 Sep |
| 6th IP meeting | IP Technical Group Members | 24 Oct 2012 | This is to do the IP meeting next day to the field day to link the pilot and the IP for continues learning |
| Training at ILRI | ILRI | To be decided after I visit the other two sites | The Diga participants found 1st week of November |
| Budget report | EECMY | 12 Oct 2012 | Ato Debela to send to ILRI |

**Field day (23 Oct 2012)**

One of the upcoming activities that the TG is planning to happen very soon is organizing field day and they agreed on the time to be on 23rd of October before the fodder plants dry. The field day will aim to create awareness about the pilot project to all members of the IP and the fodder development purpose and experience sharing by the farmers to neighboring farmers who are not involved in the pilot but have interest. The TG will develop budget break dawn and list of invites to the field day. The source of the budget is from the innovation fund. On this field day the farmers’ research group representatives from Bikila and Lelisa Dimtu kebeles will be invited to create linkage among farmers involved in the two different projects.

**6th IP meeting (24 Oct 2012)**

Next day to the field day the TG still recommend the 6th IP meeting to take place to mainly link the activities of at pilot and IP level and also discuss on the pilot project merits and drawbacks which in the end will create learning among the different stakeholders. For this ILRI with the IP focal person and members of the TG will organize the 6th IP. The TG also suggested that there is a Termite Project from ILRI at Diga where the project is being executed by WU researcher and on the same dates I was in the field the termite project with Hailemichael from ILRI held a field day and meeting with the IP members. In order to link the termite project with the IP the TG suggested that Dagne and Tadesse from Bako Research Centre will be invited to present and share their project activities and for them to learn IP activities as well.

**Insight meeting and training at ILRI**

I have consulted the TG about the insight meeting we are planning here at ILRI for the local facilitators and IP focal persons from the three sites. The TG at Diga suggested that 1st week of November is convenient for them. They found the idea of this training is very important for them particularly for the EECMY representative named Ato Debela who takes over the facilitation of the finance and activities after Dawit handover him recently. Ato Dawit was the one who participated in the last 5 IP meeting and he transfer the assignment to Ato Debele who is currently trying to work with the TG and try to know what IP and the pilot project is working all about. I tried to brief Ato Debela about the IP process and he said this kind of training is helpful to create linkage with his head office. He even doesn’t have the copy of the agreement that his office made with ILRI in relation to the IF and IP.

**Field visit:**

I have talked to the TG at woreda level and farmers at the site level about the progress made so far and how the community and TG members perceive the fodder development pilot project. The TG seems interested in the project and working their best for its success. The TG that comprises the following members is working closely with the farmers at the pilot site level and they have involved in site selection, farmer selection, purchase of in-puts, transportation and distribution, awareness creation and training for farmers and technical support on plantation and management. The following pictures which were taken by the DA named Tamiru who was assigned as M&E champion shows the process followed from the first day of awareness creation to the day I have visited the site.

**Technical Group Members:**

1. Woreda Livestock office (Gutema) – focal person replacing Dereje who recently joined Zone office of Agriculture
2. WoA (Beyene)
3. Wolega University (Dandy)
4. EECMY (Debela) – IP Local Facilitator
5. ILRI

**Photo Story**



After farmers selected, the TG provided awareness creation and training on plantation and then farmers start preparing their land and then seed purchase and transport



*The TG then distributed fodder seedlings to each farmers and these includes Rohdes Grass, Elephant grass and Chomo grass with UREA and DAP fertilizer based on the size of the land they have for the pilot project.*



*Abera with the TG visited the site and discussing with the farmers and then the TG then provided the second round training on fodder management.*





*The above pictures are during Dr Aklilu and my visit and the fodders are at interesting stage to be seen and we have seen also farmers interest at high level as they were treating it as their cash crops.*

**Community Trainings**: the Technical Group including Wolega University has provided training twice for the 40 farmers involved in the pilot fodder development. The first training was given for farmers after awareness creation was done and it focuses on plantation and recently after the farmers prepared their land and planted they received the second training on fodder management. The third training which they are planning to provide will be on feeding practices. Supervision and technical support is the TG continuous work while they visit the kebele for other assignments but the close follow up is being done by the DAs mainly by Tamiru who is the M&E champion.

**Perception of farmers and TG**

Based on the feedbacks I have collected from the TG and some of the farmers participated in the pilot and few of them have knowledge about the types of fodder plants they received and these farmers together with the TG were initiating others. The farmer called Leta is one of them and he said he is interested in the fodder for feeding his 28 cattle and he wants to also protect his land from soil erosion and that is why he was explaining to us about the Elephant grass which he planted on the upper side of his land (see the picture). The one that we are standing in is *Rhodes* grass and the right side is *Elephant* grass.

The communal grazing land also going well with other grasses but the Chomo grass failed to grow and since it is new for the farmers and DAs they didn’t recognize the reason why it fails. Some technical inputs are needed from Bako research centre who will explain the problem of the Chomo grasses on the 6th IP meeting. They are reasoning like may be the agro-ecology or the soil might not be conducive or the timing of the plant is late. I have talked to the cattle keepers if they know about the communal grazing land is protected and if they were told not to keep the cattle on the communal land. I found that they have information about the pilot and also bylaw developed by the group of farmers who own the land so their family told their children who are keeping their cattle not to cross the communal grazing land.